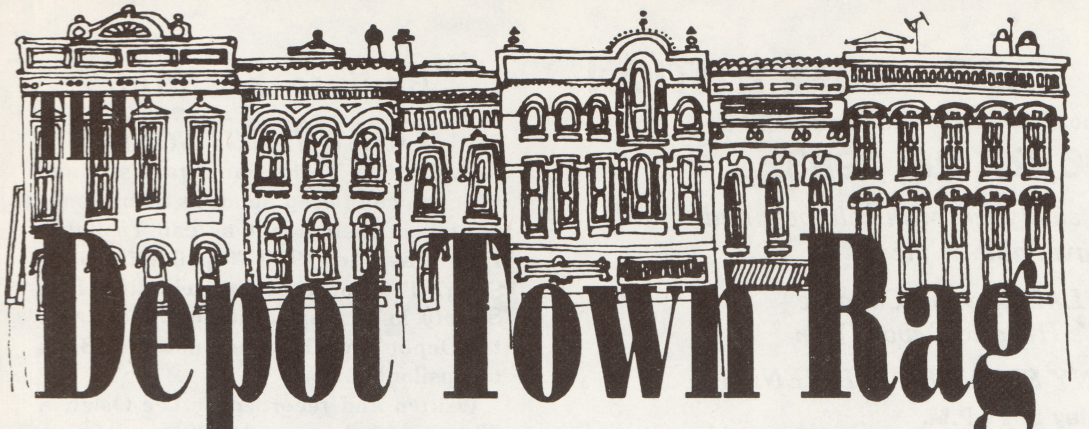

Depot Town Rag

AUG 1983

FREE 100% RAG CONTENT

MEETINGS IN AUGUST

Merchants Committee
Thursday, 7:30 p.m., August 11

Association Annual Election
Thursday, 7:30 p.m., August 18

Foundation
Thursday, 8:00 p.m., August 25

...all in the Caboose

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Throw away that old copy of NEW YORKER that's been lying on the coffee table for three months, now, and replace it with THIS COPY of a news magazine about a town you can handle, Ypsilanti's Depot Town.

Since more people discover this block at the August Heritage Festival than all the rest of the year, we've added a supplementary four pages to our monthly RAG and hope to give a broader overview of the actions of this lively and revitalized neighborhood.

If our reports pique your interest, just remember: we're down here behaving like this all year 'round. It's a wide-open game and you're always welcome aboard. Sorry, no passenger fares available, but if you want to join the crew, we've got space for you.

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MCCR DEPOT UPDATE

Every August we optimistically report progress on our poor old depot. This year's reportis a short one: The $1,600,000.00 project will be under way this fall. There are still some investment opportunities open. It's not too late to buy into this exciting rehabilitation project which will form the economic base for the district.

Depot Town IS What America WAS

"A boom in Low Tech and No Tech: Not all industry in the New Economy will involve such shiny high-tech fields as microchips, computer and lasers." TIME, 30 May 1983

Joe Wizauer keeps a computer in his office at HON'S FLOWERS and Ray Packer has digital scales and cash register at the HEALTH EMPORIUM. Our monthly DEPOT TOWN RAG is put together by computer at STANDARD PRINTING - but that is about as far as the New Techology has reached us in this business block. Depot Town revels in its nineteenth century charm and tries not at all to be next week's Plasticwood Consumer Mall. Since the so-called shopping "centers" seriously wounded the REAL centers -downtowns, we've watched them come and go. Every flashy "new" outlet only put the previous outlet out of business. We call it progress. In a last ditch effort to remain viable in a failing economy, those "centers" are now doing exactly what America's downtowns did when it happened to them: desparte promotional gimmicks, cutesy, fake facades to simulate newness, fewer real services, and an insincere and dehumanizing environment.

Depot Town was fortunate. It was off the beaten path, ignored by urban renewal schemes, never successful enough to "modernize", and developers saw little potential for those "old fashioned" buildings. But Depot Town, and other districts like it throughout the country, boasted a plain and loyal clientele, people who enjoyed the frank honesty of plain living. This homely tradition continues.

Now we worry about being too good at it. Will success spoil Depot Town?...or will the traditional values which attracted us in the first place prevail? We suspect the best technique for keeping our feet on the ground is to keep talking to each other. Why this district is so small, it's almost impossible to put something over on anyone. Just try and keep a secret in a one-block-hometown.

the NEIGHBORHOOD (to) WATCH

TO OUR GUESTS who visit this old neighborhood only at Heritage Festival time, the day-glo orange NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH signs throughout the city are among the new additions since last year's festival. We welcome the other neighborhoods, be they residential, commercial or both, to the Neighborhood Watch concept. Depot Town has been WATCHED most carefully since the first festival in 1979. Folks who avoided Ypsilanti's "skid row" since its post WWII decline started WATCHING it's comeback. There are none around today, who knew Depot Town when it was bigger than Chicago, but today's transformation is equally remarkable. Virtually every business space is occupied, the neighbors are efficiently and cooperatively organized and good times abound once again in these pre-civil War Italianate commercial buildings. Welcome back to historic Ypsilanti.. and thanks for joining us in this exciting NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH!!

3rd HERITAGE JAZZ COMPETITION

sponsored by the Depot Town Association and WEMU

August 26, 27, 28, 1983

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	singer	$150
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	singer	$75
THIRD	group	$25 per person to $150 maximum

With a $10 minimum per competing musician

FRIDAY
- 4 PM Chris Westland
- 5 PM Riff Raff
- 6 PM Cameron & Tracey Hughes
- 7 PM Laughing Gravy
- 8 PM Tritone
- 9 PM Cortez Love Quintet
- 10 PM Magic
- 11 PM SPECIAL GUEST: Danny Spencer and Friends

SATURDAY
- 1 PM Mason Jackloo
- 2 PM David Wilson Quartet
- 3 PM Stewart Cunningham Trio
- 4 PM Counter Point
- 5 PM Jazz Backgrounds
- 6 PM Anderson/Hodges Quintet
- 7 PM Stephanie Ozer/Kathleen Moore
- 8 PM Ejima Jazz Ensemble
- 9 PM Full Circle Quintet
- 10 PM Max Morgen Quintet
- 11 PM SPECIAL GUEST: Lyman Woodard Organization

SUNDAY
- 2 PM Special All-Star Performance by Jazz Competition Winners
- 4 PM VERY SPECIAL GUESTS: The Contemporary Jazz Quintet

BUMMING AROUND

Thanks and congratulations to the many merchants who contributed to the warm success of the 1983 Boomer Days. The Boomer kids loved the Bum's Rush scavenger hunt and hoboes of all ages panhandled throughout the three day celebration.

A total of fifteen acts competed in the talent show and merchants gave away $200 in prizes, thanks to the excellent judgment of our four volunteer judges. Professor Malarkey officiated and John Delcamp donated the sound system and piano. Michigan Scenic loaned their portable stage and Randy Carpenter transported and assembled it.

The Hobo Jungle was a classic event, as always, and will be reported here at greater length -- only if we run out of real news next winter.

Emma Hall and Jeff White accepted their hobo king and queen crowning with great majesty and aplomb. Best quote of the weekend came from the tot waiting in line outside the Ice Cream Parlor: pointing to Emma Hall's apartment, she whispered, "That's where the Old Queen lives!"

"Back to Ypsilanti" Our official song

Even New York, San Francisco and Chicago can't brag about as many songs written in their honor as can Ypsilanti. First was the 1910 "Ypsilanti Comic Song" (I've got an Auntie who lives in a Shanty, in Ypsilanti, Michigan)then came the Depot Town Rag; and now it's "Back to Ypsilanti"!

Written and recorded by Lee Osler, a 28-year-old singer and composer of over fifty songs, the song was heard, in live performance, in the 1983 Fourth of July Parade.

Last winter City Council designated Osler's "Back to Ypsilanti" as the City's official song and many have said it expresses the feeling and pride of those who know and love Ypsilanti. Described as a contemporary jazz ballad, Osler's song includes Depot Town, Lee's on Cross Street, Washtenaw, the Chicago Road, the water tower, ancient Greece and Eastern Michigan University. Just try and get all that into a few verses and a chorus!

Lee began singing professionally when he was thirteen and has appeared with Masterpiece and Soulmate and has been on stage with Sly and the Family Stone and Gladys Knight and the Pips. He won the Best Area Singer Award at Ypsilanti's Pease Auditorium. Lee recently appeared in Ann Arbor's Performance Network's production of "Cabaret" and will be seen in the Ypsilanti Players' "Cross Street Bridge is Falling Down" at Heritage Festival.

Lee and his song will be featured August 26, 27 & 28 at the Black Arts Festival in Parkridge Park and with the Adult Education Chorus at the Heritage Festival stage in Riverside Park that same weekend.

While working for a breakthrough with his music, Lee Osler has worked at GM Hydramatic, been a teacher's aide and hall monitor for the Ypsilanti Public Schools and received his high School diploma through the Ypsilanti Adult Education Department. Lee and Adult Ed's Jackie Ehler have formed an organization including Mayor Peter Murdock, Senator Lana Pollack, Councilmember Greg Dodd, Tom Dodd and Board of Education trustee Eugene Beatty to publish a voice, piano and guitar version of "Back to Ypsilanti" made by Dr. Morris Lawrence of Washtenaw Community College which will be available in sheet music and on 45 RPM recording at the "Ypsilanti Pool and Song, Inc." booth at the Heritage Festival.

Everybody sing: "In Ypsilanti, people coming every hour, Ypsilanti, It's such a nice place to be!"

Who is Richard Guindon and Why Does He Hate Us So?

Ypsilantians gulped audibly when THE DETROIT FREE PRESS published the Guindon cartoon of the truck driver and the bag lady: "Which way to Ypsilanti ...and why?" YPSILANTI PRESS editor Joe Matasich fired back an angry editorial and told the disrespectful cartoonist to stay out of town.

The cartoonist's next jibe surfaced right here on our own block soon after. T-shirts and WHEN IN DOUBT, INC. showed a Kilroy-like nebbish peeking over the Ypsilanti name, written as large as Hollywood's famed cut-out logotype saying, "Cars, bars and a few wierdos." More ridicule. It's humiliating. Why, I More ridicule. It's humiliating. Why you'd think we lived in Philadelphia! or Belleville! Funny thing is, Ypsilantians love it. The first order of shirts sold out fast and many new orders have followed since. Hats, with the same design, were soon to follow.

With that kind of back-handed success, the gift ladies now boast a new Guindon theme: "Discovering Depot Town - Finders, Keepers", complete with potato-faced Guindonites armed with metal detectors buzzing.

Obviously, Guindon knows us, but who the hell is Richard Guindon? Shall we sponsor another drawing contest and ask our neighbors to guess what he looks like? That picture in the FREE PRESS can't be accurate, when they show Bob Talbert as a skinny guy, or Dear Abby smiling. Where did Guindon come from? Has he ever been in Ypsilanti? Does he know about all us wonderful folk down in Depot Town?

Probably not, but after a childhood in Canada, working in Minnesota, the newspapering in California, we suspect he'd be much at ease down here. Since Depot Town has been described as being halfway between Fernwood and Mayberry, we suspect that Richard Guindon would fit in just fine with the rest of us potato-heads.

CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST ?

Special previews during Heritage Festival ! ! !

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MORE SECURE THAN ARBORLAND.....
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DOWNTOWN IS SO OBVIOUS ABOUT IT-STRADDLING MICHIGAN AVENUE AND ALL... TURN OFF THE EXPRESSWAY AND YOU BUMP RIGHT INTO IT. DEPOT TOWN IS MORE SUBTLE.. SQUNCHED RIGHT IN BETWEEN THE RIVER & THE RAILROAD TRACKS-WE'RE HARDER TO FIND-HARDER TO FORGET-YOU'LL FIND YOUR WAY BACK!
MATURITY•SECURITY•OBSCURITY
* World Famous Ypsilanti inventor, ELIJAH McCOY found his way to Depot Town when the rest of society ostracized "Coloreds". McCoy was quite at home here and was a charter member of the Eagles.

BIKERS BEWARE!

Downtown's day-glo orange sidewalk stencils shouting "NO BIKE RIDING ON SIDEWALK" may not sit well with the Historic District Commission, but they should be well-heeded in Depot Town, too. Bikes should be WALKED on the sidewalks and ridden in the street! July saw a grisly justification of this rule when a cycler dodged to miss a pedestrian and put her arm through a small store window - necessitating 250 stitches in her arm. Please KEEP VEHICLES IN THE STREET. Bicyclists must obey all the same rules as autos - except parking, of course.

On Frog Island

Dear Mr. Whaler,

I have recently had a chance to look at proposed plans for the remodeling of Frog Island. I have some reactions I would like to share with you.

I should first tell you that I write you in a dual role. I am a citizen of Ypsilanti who lives in the residential/commercial building closest to the Island. I have grown to love the place, its rustic atmosphere, its occasional soccer game, its privacy and isolation in the midst of what is often a very busy area of town.

I am the producer, for public radio station WEMU, of the Frog Island Jazz Festivals. So I have had a chance to hear, first hand, the comments of many different people who are seeing the Island for the first time. Those comments are overwhelmingly positive. People view the facility as a great place to relax, picnic, mingle with friends, commune with nature and hear music. Those opinions, plus the success of the concerts, convince me that we have a very precious facility that Ypsilanti should handle with the greatest care.

Having said all of that, let me turn to the current proposal. The plan seems intent on changing the basic nature of Frog Island. Instead of being an off-the-beaten-path area for those seeking a little solitude, the New Island would become a real hubbub of activity. Tennis courts, baseball, an amphitheatre, running track, bicycle path, paved parking with closed access, multiple entrances, elaborate landscaping. It adds up to a profound change in atmosphere. While I am not opposed to most of the prosposed facilities, I must object to the overall TONE of the plan.

Do we rallly need multiple entrances, elaborate landscaping, a formal amphitheatre, another baseball diamond? All of thoses things encourage large amounts of hanging out, attracting groups of people to the parking lots who can, while remaining within earshot of their cars, easily migrate to the Field itself. That is precisely the situation at the new City park directly across the street - easy car access and a very groomed, suburban sort of look that leads to heavy, heavy usage. Do we really need TWO such facilities so close together, right next to a business and residential area? As a resident of the area, I don't want two busy parks right outside my window. One is definitely appreciated, but one is definitely enough.

I would like to see Frog Island remain a place for people to SEEK OUT, not a facility that constantly draws crowds. The city should provide a quiet place for people looking for something besides being "where the action is." Right now, Frog Island is like Everyman's private back yard. Anyone, young or old, rich or poor, can go over there, sit down or walk around and relax without listening to loud radios, boisterous groups of people or the constant sound of cars and motorcycles coming and going.

I am certainly not against upgrading the Island. The running track is a mess and needs a lot of work - a quality cinder track would be greatly appreciated by thousands of runners in the area. As my own rather embittering experience at the last Frog Island Jazz Festival demonstrated, the Field needs greatly upgraded electrical service. (The Festival spent almost $2000 of its own money for a temporary installation that wasn't up to the job and was 400% over budget!) Running water for tennis players, bicyclists, soccer players, concert goers and picnicers would be a real boon. So would lavatories. Nature lovers would deeply appreciate improved trails along and overlooking the river, right now it is hard to get down to the river unless you are quite spry or determined.

I can't understand why there is an ampitheatre in the proposal. It is very "stuck-in," from what I can tell. It is of very limited use - it is small, in a corner and on the wrong side of the running track from where any entertainment would be staged. As a concert producer I would much sooner see the City spend its money on a rentable, portable stage and lighting set up, or stay out of that aspect entirely. I should tell you that the tent concept worked extremely well at our last show. It was, on a 95 degree day, a cool, shady breezy place, with good acoustics and a provided a festive concentration of people, good feelings and music. People sat on the grass, on blankets and in their own lawn chairs, both under and around the outside of the walless, very pretty tent. We don't need an ampitheatre for concerts. That money would be much better spent on a cinder track, electrical power, comfort facilities, judicious tree planting and pruning and, perhaps, a minimum of lighting.

The baseball diamond is the biggest disaster of all, though. It would eliminate soccer, it would eliminate half the Field from multiple use potential, it would attract heavy use, it would severely crowd, into half the current space, major events like the Heritage Festival Circus and the Frog Island Jazz Festival. There really are enough baseball diamonds in town; there really are not enough soccer fields, particularly given the rapidly increasing popularity of that sport.

I don't want to come off as being negative about the further development of Frog Island. Far from it - I am a real booster for the City and for the Island both. I would like to see the Island better utilized, by more people and in more and different ways than it already is. But I want to protect it from overuse, from blandness and sterililty, from urbanization. I don't want to see the place lose its extremely distictive, quintessentially rustic, natural secluded atmosphere. I feel that the current proposal would almost guarantee that unfortunate fate. The City and its people would be robbed of something quite precious it that were to happen.

Thank you for you consideration of this letter and your intentions about improving Frog Island for everyone. I Sincerely hope these views make sense to you and that you understand my real concerns about a quite precious facility.

Sincerely,
Jim Dulzo

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FARMERS' MARKET 39 Years in Ypsilanti !

Although the farmer's market movement in this country has blossomed in the last decade, Ypsilanti area farmers and shoppers have had a successful market going since 1944! Senior market vendors and shoppers tell of the simple market days of 8-10 vendors on South Huron Street, behind Smith Furniture, when vendors sold fresh meat and live chickens with their produce. The first market master was Mr.Harris, followed by Mr. Lang, Mr. Agustus, and Elizabeth Graham. The market worked well co-operatively without direction for long periods of time.

Betty Graham, long-time gardener and vendor every year since 1944, was the designated market master for 3 years prior to moving to Depot Town. And Nancy Cudney ably guided the market toward becoming the community landmark it has been in Depot Town for the last 5 years. To be sure, the Ypsilanti Farmers Market has a long, rich tradition of friendliness, community spirit, and old values mixing with the new. For a short time every Wednesday and Saturday, the sights, sounds, and smells of the farmers market are an enjoyable, fun, and community experience for all.

1983 Season - Join Us

Nearly 40 outdoor and indoor vendor stalls have been rented for the June-October market season. This should guarantee an abundance of the freshest, highest quality local grown produce for Ypsilanti area shoppers. Growers travel from as far away as Blissfield, Tipton, LaSalle, and South Lyon to sell at the Ypsilanti market. Plans have begun for an expanded, exciting indoor market season, as well. Interested groups or persons should contact Gary Urick, our new market master.

Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market
in historic Depot Town

The Benefits of our Market

The Farmers' Market is a local example of "direct marketing." By selling directly to the public, the costs of packing, shipping, handling, brokering, processing, wholesaling, distributing, and retailing are eliminated. This results in savings for the customer and a greater return for the farmer. The Farmers' Market creates a new outlet for his produce where he can make more use of family labor, set his own prices, and receive immediate cash payment for his products.

Because of this shortened marketing route and less handling, the shopper can buy fruits and vegetables at the very peak of maturity in freshness. The market is a convenient source of bulk fruits and vegetables for home canning, freezing or drying.

Also, the market gives customers the opportunity of talking to the person who actually produces the food. This rare meeting of farmers and consumers can be an enjoyable, educational experience, where each gains a better understanding of the problems faced by the other.

Finally, the market promotes local food production, and is supportive of small family farms as economicallly viable and culturally important parts of American community life - just one of the benefits of supporting and shopping at the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market in Historic Depot Town.

Canning/Soyfood Cookery Workshops

Two exciting and useful food workshops are scheduled for the market in th Freight House. The Washtenaw County Co-operative Extension Service will be demonstrating the tools, techniques, and benefits of home canning on September 10th and 17th.

On September 10, a Soyfoods cookery demonstration will be presented by Soyplant of Ann Arbor. Ms. Roi will offer an inside look at the local soy dairy using only organically grown Washtenaw County soybeans. Free taste-testing samples of soymilk, soysage, tofu, tempeh, and other prepared dishes will be offered to the curious, uninformed, and health-minded.Here is an opportunity to learn how to introduce these versatile, inexpensive and healthful foods into your meal and diet planning.

GRANT STREET'S FIFTH ANNUAL SALE..proves that Depot Town does not have the corner on neighborliness. The 1100 block of Grant will celebrate on August 20 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm with more than fifteen families participating in the unusual annual event. Doris Milliman says, "It is a fun day for all, sellers as well as buyers. Attics and basements have been cleaned out and treasures, as well as good junk have been put aside for the sale day. The west side's so-called "crafty people" make attractive boxes or light catcher and other handmade articles which will be on sale. You will find antiques, household articles and children's clothes, as diverse an offering as you will find anywhere." Doris invites us to meet "happy and congenial neighbors" along the 1100 block of Grant Street on August 20th. Such a district-wide event is looked upon as just another part of the warm and personal "heritage"celebrated each August in Our Town.

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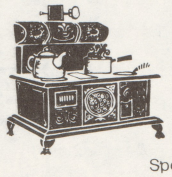
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DETOUR: Bridge Out

In the same year in which we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Brooklyn Bridge, Ypsilanti mourns the loss of its beautiful and much-loved 73-year-old Cross Street Bridge. In a city which can truly be said to have an edifice complex, the loss of this structure will be greatly felt, since it connects two jewels of the city's unique historic district: North Huron Street and Depot Town.

The City of Ypsilanti has announced the replacement of the old bridge which was built in 1910. The deteriorating ancient beauty is scheduled to come down in September 1983 and its removal and erection of the new bridge are expected to take more than six months. How will this new traffic pattern affect Depot Town, just recently experiencing an economic comeback? Here's what several regular Depot Towners predict:

DAVID DAVIS: Swimming across the river will be good exercise before breakfast.

ALEX SUCZEK: It might improve the quality of life.

SUSAN HOMEYER: It would make Depot Town even less accessible than Windsor without the Ambassador Bridge. Maybe we west-siders should petition the City to reopen the underground Railroad tunnels.

GARY URICK: We'll develop new trails to Depot Town. Many roads lead to Depot Town. People will discover new parts of the district.

CARL GRESEHOVER: I think it would be great to take it down and leave it down. Walking around lately, I've been imagining what Depot Town was like one hundred years ago and I marvel at the technology that went into building the present bridge. Just imagine what hard work it must have been to build that bridge back then.

LINDA KORTESOJA-KLENCZAR: I hope we'll still be able to walk across. That's vital to us 'lunchers' up at Old Town Hall.

AL ROBINSON: We'll have to establish a ferry service across the river to keep the city united.

LYNNDEAN SCHMIEDEKE: There are other ways to get here. I always come in from the Farm Bureau on Forest Avenue. The Cross Street Bridge handles mostly through traffic.

PATSY CHANDLER: Start a helicopter service. Let the City buy it. That would shake up Van Whaler, the City manager.

CARL VOLK: Why this could cause civil war - an East/West controversy.

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OPAL EDSON: We have got to let people know about the short cut coming through Market Place Drive. Last year the city kept that road up better than the main street.

PAUL FETTERS: I'd rather have the city take it down than have it fall down.

SALLY RICHIE: I'm not worried about the old bridge coming down as much as the new bridge going up. The old bridge has to come down.

BILL FRENCH: I suspect it will take longer than the announced six months to replace the bridge. I think it's important

continued on page 7

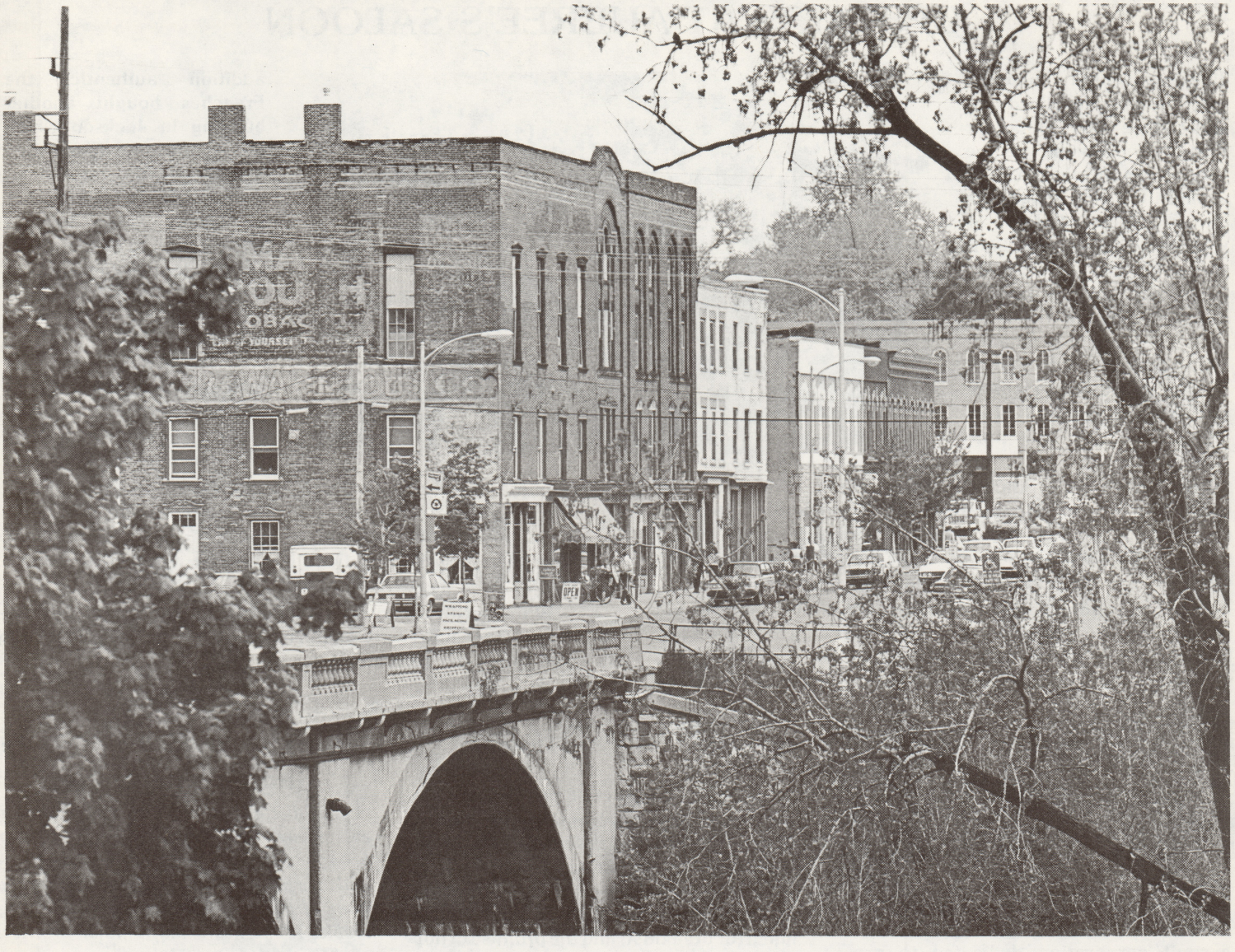
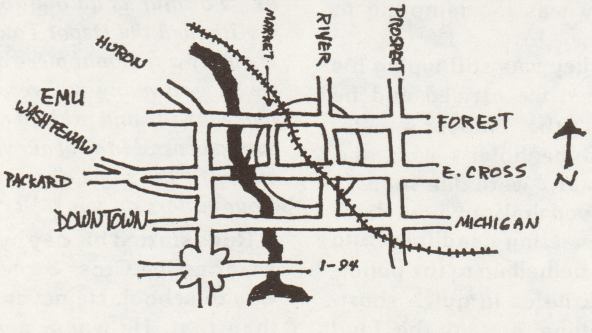


Photo by Carl Volk of Sun Graphics



DETOUR - from page 6

that we merchants plan ahead and educate the people how to get here.

DIANE LARUE: I feel a real sense of loss. I am concerned for some of the businesses in Depot Town. Hopefully our publicity and advertising of the detours will encourage traffic.

JOANIE: I hope the new bridge will last as long as the old one.

RAY PACKER: I'm not very happy about it. I know the bridge needs to be fixed. I just hope they put a new bridge in that's compatible with the area.

JOE WIZAUER: We're concerned it will cut down our foot traffic. It's nice to bave the bridge redone, but the way I am when I get up in the morning, I'll probably forget the bridge is out and drive right into the river!

WARREN LEWIS: This is sad. The old bridge is so dear to all of us. It's a lovely, old bridge and it will be hard to get used to a new design.

OTHER COMMENTS: People will quickly discover the Forest Avenue-River Street entrances to the district.

-Ann Arbor people won't be able to find us,but who cares?

-It's just another creative challenge for the neighborhood to face.

-New parking patterns will appear.

Olde Towne Coin & Gold

We Buy Silver and Gold

18 E. Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(313) 483-6155

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OVER 50 GIFT MAKERS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES
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BAR-GAN AUTO RENTAL
308 North River
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

UPSTAIRS AT AUBREE'S SALOON

Jitterbug wouldn't know the place today. He lived upstairs at the Oliver House for thirty-two years and was the last resident to leave in 1975 when Bill French bought the bar and decided to start renovating the second floor. A fire the previous year had convinced most of the tenants to leave, but Jitterbug, aka Bill Platt, was a part-time bartender and clean-up man in that building which had been a railroad hotel since 1870. He saw little reason to leave.

Bill French well remembers the search they conducted together to try to retreive Jittrbug's ivory-handled pool cue which had fallen behind the back bar. They never were able to get it out, but they may see it soon - as the extensive remodeling continues - in the area's oldest continuous-use facility.

Jitterbug is gone now, but his ghost may still inhabit the old room he kept for a large part of his life. Although that space has looked quite utilitarian during the long remodeling process, the finished product will fool most casual observers. To keep the addition authentic, the Frenches bought another building in Jackson which was about to be demolished and moved the tin ceiling, wainscotting, trim and other nineteenth century niceties for installation in their new, second floor restaurant.

The first upstairs commercial property on the block will serve Mexican and American food, continue with an excellent bar and will feature live music and other entertainments. This new development is a good example of a business which capitalizes on its colorful past and long history of service to the neighborhood. The walls are filled with photographic evidence of their committment. Now their new second floor is properly antiqued and looks like it's been up there all along.

Watch for Jitterbug. He's still there - in the old photo of a horse drawn Goebel Brewery wagon unloading in front of Weber Drug and the Oliver House!

Depot Town Rag

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.
Carolyn McKeever, president

A RAG REPORT

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG, now in it's sixth year of production, started out as a hectographed neighborhood newsletter, then graduated to ditto copies with news on one side and a poster about the monthly meeting on the other. Soon came commercial printing on legal size paper, then to four pages. Set type followed and the additions of photos enhanced the quality of our little monthly. Paper changed to 'antique brown' for a year or so, then to newsprint and the "RAG" theme.

We're printed monthly at Standard Printing, with the third Thursday Association meeting as our deadline. This issue will see twelve pages (our largest, yet) and 1500 copies in the edition.

Regular Contributors: Diane LaRue, Tom Kornilakis, Kate McCracken, Tom Dodd, The merchants, The Foundation, The Association, The Farmers' Market.

GRAVY TRAIN

The Rag staff doesn't get invited to a whole lot of press conferences in this block, so when the announcement of an early morning breakfast meeting at THE DELI SHOPPE came our way, we were most punctual. We seldom miss a free lunch (or breakfast) and the promise of hot biscuits and gravy was too tempting to pass up.

Professor Malarkey was still typing his press releases when we arrived and he informed us that the "Mayor's wife, Councilmember Bubenhofer's son, and some senator's sister," were due soon.

The NEWS arrived half an hour late, grumbling about meeting deadlines, and four eager staffers bellied up to the buffet. Susan Oppat took notes in quick shorthand without spilling any of the food on herself. Her editor will probably bury the article with late breaking news about last year's street ART fair.

The PRESS didn't show up at all, but most of them live down here and will probably pick up their free meal and press release later.

Scrambled eggs, coffee, bacon, sausage and hash browns were excellent and the buffet also included fresh fruits, melons, homemade applesauce and more. Morning sun through the stained glass windows is worth the trip, also. Betty Beck is a comfortable hostess and an innovative merchant. We recommend the breakfast buffet.

On Hometown Loyalty: Rags Remembered

(Ypsi folks are so much like hometowners everywhere. They take their own neighborhood for granted –until someone knocks it – and then they prove to be patriotically loyal to some of the most ordinary amenities imaginable. We've heard that attitude described as, "Faithful as an old dog."

Although the Depot Town RAG'S mascot is purely a fictional piece of public relations, we suggest many will recognize the style of fierce loyalty and pride of ownership found in such a beast. Many of our visitors and readers easily fit the same description. We confess. Your editors do too.)

Rags started his day by walking the kids as far as the Cross Street Bridge on their way to school. He never went any farther than that. He was a neighborhood dog. Oh, he had a last name, as most pets in the block did, but everyone knew him as just "Rags" and, more than any canine in memory, he seemed to be known by and belong to just about everyone who passed his way.

No one owned Rags, but Rags owned the block. Anything that came within his line of vision belonged to him and, sooner or later, he would inspect it and either give it his approval or reject it - ignoring it from that moment on. Anything long ignored by Rags did not become a real part of the neighborhood.

During the day Rags would nose around the river bank and acknowledge his other

continued on page 9

RAGS-continued from page 8

four-legged associates. He didn't chase the woodchuck by the bridge. He'd just note his presence and pass on. About the closest thing to an enemy was the skunk on Frog Island and Rags only needed one lesson in respect there. Everybody else learned along with him -the hard way. Rags was personna non grata even three days after his tomato juice bath.

Rags seemed to tell time in an uncanny way and would rise from his nap in the sidewalk sun and amble to the bridge just in time to walk the kids home in the afternoon. Everyone gave him that cursory hug which said, "I'm back. What happened while we were in school?" When Rags got older, he would sometimes get confused on weekends, and look quizzically at passersby as if to accuse them of way-laying the school kids.

People who were just passing through would ask, "Does that dog bite?" and we'd laugh and say, "If he didn't he'd starve to death."

Rags knew when the papers were delivered and would commisserate with the old gentlemen at the newstand on the state of things in the rest of the world. "Nope", he seemed to say, "No bad news on our block."

We could find the people Rags owned by looking for that loyal lump of fat and fur on the sidewalk near the door of the bar or restaurant where he snoozed. Others might step over him or talk to him as they passed and people who didn't know him better often showed concern for "that poor, old, lost dog" but Rags knew better. He was waiting. His eyes would twinkle, but his chin didn't leave the sidewalk. Rags response was the slow-thumping tail that activated when his people were about to appear. He sensed their arrival long before sound or scent. And he took them for granted. He knew they would come. Everything was in place. Predictable. Just as it should be.

And Rags was as much a part of it as anyone else. That's the style we call hometown loyalty. Being a matter-of-fact participant. Being a part of things. Regularity and dependability. Being recognized by others and recognizing them.

Visitors often thought the neighborhood was the buildings, but we knew better. It was Rags...and us.

PHANTOM OF THE ATTIC
COMIC BOOKS • BASEBALL CARDS • SUPPLIES
50 E. CROSS • 485-4930
YPSILANTI, MI 48197

Tunnels Analyzed ... Again:

"Tunnels went to an 'Antiquities Mine' " says Malarkey

Depot Town's Professor Malarkey permitted the following interview not long ago regarding his excavations on the north side of the block. Almost every hole dug in this old railroad district uncovers at least one tunnel, high enough for a person to stand in, some leading toward the Huron River, others heading north from basements, perhaps to long-absent detached kitchens and/or out-houses. May have speculated on the purposes of our tunnels - and Malarkey is certainly entitled to his opinion.)

RAG: How did you find the secret to Depot Town's tunnels, Professor?

MALARKEY: Oh, I was just digging behind the Follett House and found another one. I can now prove how wrong everyone else was with their conclusions. Look. This one was filled with old clothes, a few tablecloths and napkins, then some perfectly preserved croissants. Previous theorists would have stopped there and concluded thatthese things were stuffed down there by last month's tenants, I suppose, but I kept searching. After much digging, I realized these things weren't there by accident. This tunnel converged with yet another one, filled with cheap rhinestone jewelry. What a sight! When my twelve-cell flashlight hit that passage, I was almost blinded.

RAG: Then you contend that a generation or so ago, people stored things down there and now they're being found and peddled as antiques? Like a new King Solomon's mine, perhaps?

MALARKEY: Not at all. We just bring the stuff up. Nobody ever put it down there. It just started there. Grew down there, for all I know. Who knows? Why, you should see the Oak Cavern. It's one of the cave's most delightful sights. I've been down there, too. You have to use flashlights, though. No open flames are allowed in the mines. That old furniture is highly flammable. The Oak Cavern is just down the shaft from the Stained Glass Collonade. What a site that is!

RAG: Then, your contention is, professor, that antiques actually GROW... underground? That's a little hard to swallow, professor.

MALARKEY: You should see where all those Hudsons came from. The widest caves, with vintage autos parked wall-to-wall, have ramps leading right up to Jack Miller's place. There's no rust down there until you get near Detroit. Then the salt is terrible. Almost no cars left over there at all. A few rusty old Fords under Dearborn, but they're mostly shot by now. I think I saw Tom Conway poking around there with a flashlight last week.

RAG: Professor Malarkey, we think you're pulling our leg. Did you maybe find some thirty-year-old Scotch down there in one of your caves, too?

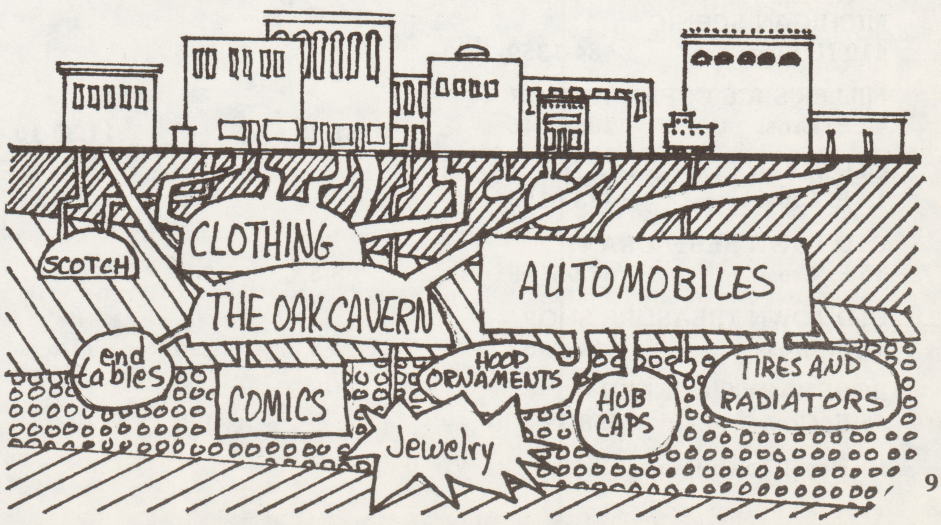
MALARKEY: You laugh, but some of the smarter merchants have realized what a "gold mine" they're sitting on. They have crews working nights, just bringing those artifacts up to their basements and dusting them off for the salesroom the next day.

RAG: O.K. We'll bite. Where is the entrance to this so-called "Mine of Antiquities"?

MALARKEY: There are many ways into the tunnels. Almost every commercial property has access. If you haven't found one yet, you just need to look harder.

RAGS: Will we ever run out of resources down in Depot Town? How long can this treasure trove last?

MALARKEY: Let me give you a tour of Depot Town's untapped natural resources. When you get a good look at what's really just beneath the surface here, it's really impressive. We have quite a variety of resources at our disposal.



DEPOT TOWN, Ypsilanti, Michigan JULY 1983	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AND EVERYTHING NICE 27 E. Cross 483-6905		10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	9-5
AUBREE'S SALOON 39-41 E. Cross 487-110	noon-2am	11-2am	11-2am	11-2am	11-2am	11-2am	11-2am
B & D RETAIL PLUMBING & HEATING 13 E. Cross 487-1510	-	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-12pm
BAR-GAN AUTO RENTAL 412 N. River 482-8950		8-6	8-6	8-6	8-6	8-6	8-6
CITY BODY SHOP 20E. Cross 482-4737	-	8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5	8-5	-
CITY RADIATOR SERVICE 11 E. Cross 483-2248	-	8-6	8-6	8-6	8-6	8-6	8-noon
COOPER RADIO & TV SERVICE 306 N. River 482-1798	-	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	-
THE DELI SHOPPE 17 E. Cross 483-3574	8-4	7-9	7-9	7-9	7-9	7-9	7-6
DEPOT EXCHANGE 54 E. Cross 482-1780	Noon-5	Maybe	10:30-6	10:30-6	10:30-8	10:30-6	10:30-6
DEPOT MAILBOX 15 E. Cross 485-4994	-	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-4
D.T.A. CABOOSE 400 Market Place 483-1480	by Reservation.....				7:30-9	by Reservation.....	
ESQUIRE INTERIORS 10 E. Cross 482-338	-	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5	9-5
FANTASEE LIGHTING 404 N. River 482-6565	-	9-6	9-6	9-6	9-6	9-6	12-4
HEALTH EMPORIUM 19 E. Cross 485-2711	-	10-6:30	10-6:30	10-6:30	10-6:30	10-6:30	9-5
HON'S FLOWERS 46 E. Cross 482-2124	-	8:30-5:30	8:30-5:30	8:30-5:30	8:30-5:30	8:30-5:30	8:30-4:30
IKE'S DEPOT TOWN BARBER SHOP 40 E. Cross 483-6300	-	-	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6
J & J PLASTERCRAFT 21 E. Cross 483-2533	-	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6	8:30-6	9-5
JACQUELINE'S BOUTIQUE 25 E. Cross 483-8150	-	-	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5
JIM MAC DONALD'S ANTIQUES 29 E. Cross 481-0555	?	?	12-6	12-6	12-6	12-6	12-6
MICHIGAN SCENIC 410 N. River 484-1359							
MILLER'S ICE CREAM PARLOR 42 E. Cross 485-7546	1-10	-	11:30-10	11:30-10	11:30-10	11:30-11	11:30-11
OLD TOWN COIN & GOLD 18 E. Cross 483-6155	-	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-6	10-6	10-4
OLD TOWN RESTAURANT 36 E. Cross 483-6168	8-5	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8
OLD TOWN TREASURE SHOP 32 E. Cross 484-0457	1-3	11-6	11-6	11-6	11-8	11-6	11-6
ROSEMARY'S CORNER 15 E. Cross 458-4994	-	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-5	10-4

RIVER ART WORKS 48 E. Cross 482-8785	-	10-6:30	10-6:30	10-6:30	10-8	10-6:30	10-5
PHANTOM OF THE ATTIC 50 E. Cross 485-4930	12-5	10-7	10-7	10-7	10-7	10-7	10-7
SHEAR GENIUS 20 E. Cross 483-1305	-	by appoint. 12-8	12-8	12-8	12-8	12-8	
SIDETRACK 56 E. Cross 483-1035	3-12	11-2	11-2	11-2	11-2	11-2	11-2
STANDARD PRINTING 35 E. Cross 483-0339	-	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	8-4:30	-
TED'S AUTO ELECTRIC 307 N. River 483-1238		8-5:30	8-5:30	8-5:30	8-5:30	8-5:30	-
OCEANS IN MOTION 32 E. Cross	1-3	11-6	11-6	11-6	11-6	11-6	11-6
VINTAGE PASSION 312 N. River	12-5	10:30-6	10:30-6	10:30-6	10:30-8	10:30-6	10:30-6
WHEN IN DOUBT, INC. 23 E. Cross	-	10-5	10-6	10-	10-8	10-6	10-5
YPSILANTI FARMERS' MARKET 400 Rice Street 483-1480	-	-	-	8-2	-	-	8-2

THIS IS A MEMBERSHIP HUSTLE:

In the few years of the Depot Town Association's existence you've never seen anything like this. Until now we've only printed the different membership opportunities in the Depot Town Rag. No hard sell. No buttonholing.

In those several years, while property values in the rest of the city have fallen, Depot Town's property values have increased! If you can name one other organization which can take any credit for that turn-around, pay your dues to them. Otherwise, we suggest you support the D.T.A. which has been supporting this neighborhood's investments in a most dynamic and creative manner..

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP ($10) is suggested for the residents who wish to get in on the several insurance plans or for outside interesteds who wish to show their support of the many exciting activities in this block

OWNER/MANAGER MEMBERSHIP ($25) is for those who own property and/or manage businesses in the district and participate as active promoters of the district.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP ($100) is for those who appreciate the work of the association but cannot give all the volunteer time to make such an organization work.

Your neighbors have made a great committment already. Won't you join them? We may have accomplished our ten year plan ahead of schedule, but we still have a long way to go.

OLD TIME NEIGHBORLINESS PAYS OFF

THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.

DEPOT TOWN MERCHANTS COMMITTEE

HISTORIC DEPOT TOWN FOUNDATION

Get in on the ACTION: The DTA CABOOSE, the Freight House and the entire district await your creativity!

Write:
DTA.
The Caboose 400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Mi 48197

D.T.A. Memberships:

Associate	**$10**
Regular	**$25**
Sustaining	**$100**

SPECIAL PROJECTS
Heritage Jazz Competition
Winter Jazz Series
Frog Island Jazz Festival
Boomer Days
The Depot Town Rag
Victorian Holiday
Steam Train Excursion
Children's Halloween Party
The Great Train Race
KIDSART
Holiday Artists' Market
Insurance Plans
Professor Malarkey
100 Year Old Caboose

DEPOT TOWN: Firmly rooted in the past --with a clear view forward.

D.T.A. Election Imminent

With all the hype of Heritage Fest, some have suggested that the nominating committee present a slate in August, vote in September. If that doesn't pass at the August 18 meeting, we'll have to vote there and then. Remember: Carolyn KcKeever has already served as president a year longer than the constitution allows and, excellent as she is, we must replace her. Vice President, secretary and treasurer are up, again too, although we certainly encourage this year's excellent officers to run again.

Only rules for voting are: paid-up owner/manager memberships ($25) get one vote each. Associate ($10) and Sustaining members ($100) may still work as hard as ever, however, but they do not vote.

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HERITAGE FESTIVAL'S MOST SUBTLE SHOW

The Volunteers. It can't work without you. The following Depot Towners look forward to your help. Please contact them soon.

JAZZ COMPETITION: Jim Dulzo and Carolyn McKeever.
Set up chairs, tables, lights, sound, clean-up.

BEER TENT: Rex Richie
Serving, tickets, picking up

PARADE: Paul Fetters
more than 100 units to get into place early Saturday morning.

CABOOSE: Tom Dodd
hosting an open house with memberships, information, rentals, etc.

EXHIBITS: Judy Andrews
registration, set-up and evaluations of hundreds of organizations, food, arts, and craft exhibitors.

FARMERS' MARKET: Gary Urick
possible extended hours, more exhibits parking.

Sales during the Festival are often lower than other weekends, but many will find us for the first time and come back when it's not so crowded for shopping tours. This is Depot Town's biggest exposure time. Help us to look our very best.

What'sNew.....

AT YPSILANTI'S OLD HERITAGE FESTIVAL?

CHRISTINE BLINN....is an old hand at volunteering for this enormous event and brought her many talents to the front of the committee table this year where she co-chairs with long-time boss lady Nathalie Edmunds. Guiding more than one hundred non-profit organizations and countless volunteers, Christine is a capable and energetic manager of a diverse and enthusiastic commuity. Christine and Nat are the co-hostesses of Our Town's biggest event of the year and lead our many host committees by their good and hard-working examples.

RIVERBOAT GAMBLING ....makes its debut this year in a huge tent in Riverside Park. The Central Business Community (CBC) will operate a beer concession, roulette, big wheel, and dice games in the "gay nineties" atmosphere. The event virtually supports the expenses of Belleville's Strawberry Festival and the Heritage Fest Committee looks forward to its replacing the previous grants from the Michigan Department of Commerce which got us started. We're on our own, now.

LIVING HISTORY ENCAMPMENT.... Valerie Helle and Robert Fox brought the most authentic views of Americana to the festival planning sessions last winter in the costume and customs of 1776, 1812, and 1865. Old tyme crafts, life style displays and battle reenactments will all be presented in exact historical detail at the south end of Riverside Park. Within the camp visitors will see the opening ceremony at 9:30 am Saturday and 10 am Sunday. Contests will include fire-making, run-for-the-jug, frying pan throw, tomahawk and knife throws. Closing ceremony for the encampment is Saturday at 5 pm.

THE MARBLE TOURNAMENT....promises to grow each year, soon sending local champions to regional and national competitions. Contractors will be installing permanent playing circles in Riverside Park this month. Get out those peeries, agates and shooters and practice up !

IKE'S
DEPOT
TOWN
BARBER
SHOP
40
E. CROSS
YPSILANTI
483-6300

PINK, BROWN AND GRAY...
Great new paint job on DEPOT EXCHANGE. Several folks in the MASONIC BLOCK plan to use the same color scheme, but in different combinations. The three color design was suggested by Dick Macias, author of the 1976 DEPOT TOWN STUDY.

BEST YET AWARD for this month goes to Shirley and Joanne Kornilakis for their initiative shown in their bold, new "fake front" on the OLD TOWN TREASURE SHOP.

A new technique in Depot Town's renaissance:

The cast iron facade was torn out and replaced with cinder block and sheet metal years ago.

Now the original facade is PAINTED back on, (Pure Victorian fakery) and the slides, documenting the replication, make up a piece called "A VICTORIAN STORE FRONT IS MISSING."

Originally 32 East Cross was the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (the A&P). It has also been seen as a produce company, plumbing and heating co., several television repair shops and is now "Old Town Treasure Shop -since 1981"

THE GOLDEN GOOSE goes to James MacDonald for owning a shop next to the most low-key planter on the block. The Botanical Gardens it's not; just green, natural, and quietly understated. What Is that stuff growing in the planter, Jim?

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FOR YOUR
NUTRITIONAL NEEDS
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DEPOT TOWN YPSILANTI

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• AUTO GLASS INSTALLED
• ALIGNMENT & BALANCE
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